



Quest Dispatch

Quest for the Best!



Pre-Games Newsletter #2 March 2008

Strategic Air and Space Museum

Once, a couple of decades ago, the city of Omaha was “ground zero” in the Cold War between the Soviet Union and the United States. Today, there is a way to experience the feeling of that tense period in our nation’s history.

The Strategic Air and Space Museum is located about 20 minutes west of downtown Omaha. In 1959, General Curtis Lemay’s dream of a museum showcasing preserved historic aircraft became a reality when the Strategic Air Command Museum was born. In 1998, the museum moved from Offutt Air Force Base to its \$29.5 million dollar facility near Ashland, Neb. It is a state-of-the-art 300,000 square foot conservatory for several of the most famous strategic aircraft and missile systems in the U.S. Air Force arsenal. The crown jewel of this unique collection is the Lockheed SR-71 Blackbird, mounted in a glass atrium composed of 525 glass panels.

The museum has an aircraft restoration area where you can observe dedicated preservationists cleaning, remodeling and painting new additions to the collection.

There is also a children’s interaction area where kids can have fun with flight science. They can see the exciting things that can happen in the spacecamp program as well. The museum store has all sorts of memorabilia for sale, from SR-71 T-shirts to smaller scale models of the planes displayed in the museum. Be sure to stop by this exciting attraction while you’re in town.



Photo courtesy of the Omaha Convention and Visitors Bureau

Eating Well in Omaha

Good food, a glass of wine and the laughter of newly minted friends – is there more to life? Omaha has a plate and a place for every appetite!

Are you in a Mediterranean mood? Several Greek eateries, including Katies or The Greek Islands, provide the joys of gyros, salads heaped with cheese and olives, and for dessert, baklava. Some notable Italian restaurants offer everything from the old style favorites like Malara’s Italian Restaurant to the new contemporary tastes of modern Italy found at Vivace.

Don’t forget España for authentic continental Spanish culinary delights – along with talented Flamenco dancers who perform nightly.

If you are a fan of authentic Latino cuisine, check out the South Omaha area restaurants. You can find pupusas, gorditas and burria, as well as Mexican specialties from Michoacan and Jalisco, creamy smooth to eye-popping hot. Come to Omaha to compete in the Games but bring your appetite along, too!

Volunteer!

The volunteer application link is located at www.wheelchairgames.va.gov. Volunteer requests and information will be entered into the volunteer database. If you have questions, contact Mike Wittrock at michael.wittrock@va.gov.

Attention Athletes

Please note the following schedule changes. Handcycling will be held on Saturday, July 26 at 8:30 a.m. at the Qwest Center Omaha. Trapshooting will now be at 10 a.m. and 12 noon on Tuesday, July 29.

DURHAM WESTERN HERITAGE MUSEUM

Beautiful architecture blends with memories of a time gone by at the historic Durham Western Heritage Museum. Opened in 1931, Union Station was built by the Union Pacific Railroad as a showpiece in the city. Today, the museum is considered one of Omaha's most unique treasures.

One of the largest attractions at the Durham Western Heritage



Photo courtesy of the Omaha Convention and Visitors Bureau

Museum is the main waiting room. Designed in art deco architecture, it features a ceiling made of sculpted plaster, with painted and silver leaf trim. Six restored bronze, copper and glass chandeliers are 13 feet high and five feet in diameter. This impressive

room measures 160 feet long, 72 feet wide and it has a 65-foot ceiling. The area contains ten cathedral-like plate glass windows, a patterned terrazzo floor, columnettes of blue Belgian marble and a wainscoting of black Belgian marble.

The building that houses the Durham Western Heritage Museum used to be known as Union Station. The renovated building offers an exquisite look at Omaha's history. Designed by Gilbert Stanley and opened in 1975, the name of the museum was changed in 1997 in honor of the Durham family, who were very instrumental in the comeback of the building.

Upcoming exhibits during the week of the National Veterans Wheelchair Games (July 25-29, 2008) are:

1. Amazon Voyage: Vicious Fishes and Other Riches
2. The Sea Beneath Our Feet
3. Baseball in Omaha

Omaha's Henry Doorly Zoo

Lions, tigers and bears – oh my! They're all in Omaha, at the world famous Henry Doorly Zoo! This state-of-the-art zoological park is a great reason to visit Omaha all by itself. The zoo features every type of display, from Antarctic penguins to tropical Indonesian lemurs to desert meerkats. The tropical forests of the Lied Jungle ring with the haunting calls of lemurs as monkeys jump from tree to tree and bizarre fish swim in the creeks below. The beautiful Scott Aquarium has a tank full of sharks and stingrays that you literally walk (or roll) through, in a tunnel of such clarity that it almost seems you can touch the stingrays. For a taste of the bizarre, go under the

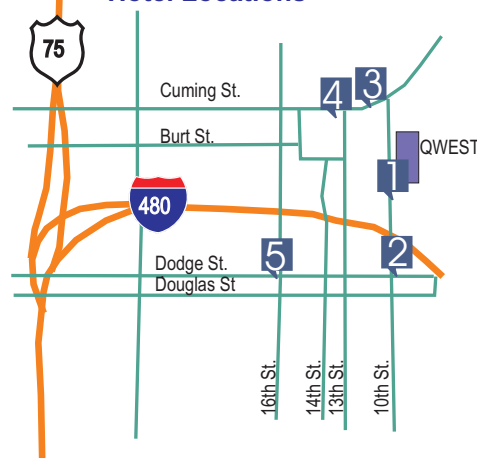


Photo courtesy of the Omaha Convention and Visitors Bureau

Desert Dome to the Kingdoms of the Night display, with its bats, alligators and owls. The Henry Doorly Zoo will keep the whole family spellbound. Don't miss it!

Hotel Locations

1. Hilton - Omaha
1001 Cass St.
2. Hilton Garden Inn
1005 Dodge St.
3. Hampton Inn
1212 Cumming St.
4. Homewood Suites
1314 Cumming St.
5. Doubletree Hotel
1616 Dodge St.



Five primary hotels will be used for the Games, all offering comfortable accommodations in close proximity to the Qwest Center Omaha and each other. All questions about lodging should go to PVA Headquarters at (800) 424-8200, ext. 616. We think you'll be pleased with your accommodations this July!

28th National Veterans Wheelchair Games
www.wheelchairgames.va.gov
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